



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Michael P. Nolin
Commissioner

April 11, 2006

The Honorable Carl R. Johnson, Chairman
Senate Environment and Wildlife Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 103
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Re: HB 1265, An act establishing the council on the relationship between public health and the environment

Dear Chairman Johnson and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the Department of Environmental Services (DES) in support of HB 1265, which seeks to establish a council on the relationship between public health and the environment.

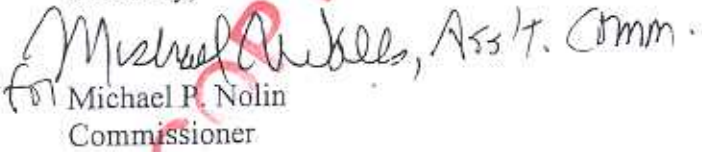
DES has long recognized that environmental hazards can have a major impact on public health and the quality of life in New Hampshire, and has always worked diligently to reduce exposure to environmental risks in the state. Over the past decade the department has been challenged with addressing more and more public health issues that demand our attention, requiring us to set priorities and work collaboratively with others in order to efficiently and effectively tackle the issues of greatest importance to the state.

Over the past five years, DES has found that our involvement in the *Legislative Commission to Study the Relationship between Public Health and the Environment* has helped us to prioritize our efforts and collaborate with others to address these important issues. Through the *Commission*, DES has been able to participate in a forum where important environmental issues that affect public health in the state are recognized, discussed, and prioritized by *Commission* members including legislators, representatives of other state agencies, and members of the public. Further, *Commission* members then work collaboratively to identify and act to implement reasonable solutions to these problems.

DES views the Council that will be formed by enactment of HB 1265 as a continuation of the collaborative work of the *Commission*, and we wholeheartedly support its creation. DES is committed to a safe and healthy environment for all New Hampshire citizens. By identifying environmental health areas where our citizens may currently be under-protected, and recommending appropriate action to enhance such protection, this council can significantly assist state and local public health and environmental agencies in prioritizing future efforts to have the greatest health benefit for our citizens.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our support for HB 1265. Please call me at 271-3503 if you have any questions or would like further information.

Sincerely,


for Michael P. Nolin
Commissioner

cc: Senate Environment and Wildlife Committee Members
Rep. Barbara French
Rep. James Pilliod
Sen. Joseph Foster
Sen. André Martel
Sen. Martha Fuller Clark